

2015-2016 CENTRE CITY ANNUAL UPDATE TO COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Calgary continues to make great strides in implementing the vision of the Centre City Plan.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the SPC on Planning and Urban Development recommend that Council receive for information the Centre City 2015 – 2016 update.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPC ON PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, DATED 2016 JUNE 08:

That the Administration Recommendation contained in Report PUD2016-0457 be approved.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

On 2007 May 07 Council approved the Centre City Plan (CPC2007-049), which included a recommendation for regular monitoring and reporting on the Centre City.

On 2006 May 08 Council allocated funds to address the safety of citizens and community issues in the downtown Core (M2006-02), and launched Clean to the Core on 2006 August 23.

BACKGROUND

The Centre City Plan is a comprehensive and strategic long-term vision for the future of Calgary's Centre City. The Plan presents a 30-year vision for creating a Centre City that is a liveable, thriving and caring place.

The Centre City Implementation (CCI) team, now part of Urban Strategy, coordinates initiatives, facilitates collaboration, and builds strong partnerships with internal business units and external stakeholders to achieve the vision of the Centre City Plan.

The vision of a vibrant, safe and clean Centre City where people want to live, work and play continues to be realized as Administration and external partners share knowledge and resources, leveraging opportunities to bring the vision to life.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Since 2007, The City's continued investment in Centre City has resulted in a more attractive and vibrant core, a greater capacity to support and encourage future investment and growth by the private sector. Implementation of the Centre City Plan has been successful because of the cross-corporate collaborative model used on all initiatives, from cleanliness and safety programs through to capital construction projects.

City of Calgary achievements in the Centre City in 2015 include:

- Construction of the First St. S.W. underpass enhancements
- Implementation of the Downtown Cycle Track Pilot Project
- Launch of the Engaging Vulnerable People Education Initiative
- Planning and engagement for the Green Line alignment through Centre City

Approval(s): Stanley, Rollin concurs with this report. Author: Taylor, Cathy
City Clerk's: D. Williams

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- Council approval of the Civic District Public Realm Strategy
- Continued implementation of public realm beautification initiatives, including the Centre City Banner Program and expansion of the historic signal box wrap program into the Downtown Core
- Encapsulation of the LRT tracks as part of the construction for the New Central Library
- Completion of the West Eau Claire Park and Public Realm Plan

Initiatives underway or planned for 2016 include:

- Eight Street and Fourth St. S.W. underpass enhancement projects
- First St. S.W. corridor improvement project
- 17th Ave. reconstruction
- Downtown West sidewalk improvements
- Third St. S.E. Master Plan
- Public engagement for Olympic Plaza Cultural District redevelopment plan
- Historic City Hall rehabilitation
- Centre City Vehicular Wayfinding Program
- Finalization of the Eight St. S.W. Master Plan

Urban Strategy is working with other departments to develop a land strategy for strategic city assets coupled with necessary public infrastructure investments.

Refreshing the Centre City Plan

Due to rapid changes in the Centre City, the Centre City Plan is no longer current. The East Village Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) was approved after the Centre City Plan was already in place. An ARP is in process for Downtown West, and an ARP scoping report for Chinatown. Policies and guidelines around mobility, street design and park priorities have all been updated. Through 2016 and 2017 Community Planning, in collaboration with Urban Strategy, will be undertaking a scoping exercise to determine the best process and resources required to reframe the Centre City Plan within the current policy context. As the Plan is owned by and impacts multiple departments as well as external partners, these partners will be engaged in the conversation.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

CCI initiated the fourth Centre City Citizen Perception Survey in 2015. 918 citizens who live in the Centre City, live outside of and work in the Centre City and live and work outside of the Centre City were surveyed. An infographic highlighting key findings is presented in the Attachment.

Of particular note, 55 per cent of respondents indicated that the Centre City is a desirable place to live, up from 49 per cent in 2013 and 39 per cent in 2011. Despite the downturn in the economy, there was an increase in respondents reporting that they had visited the Centre City monthly or more frequently for non-work activities, a total of 62 per cent in 2015 compared to 51 per cent in 2013.

Strategic Alignment

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Continued implementation of the Centre City Plan aligns with the five Council priorities articulated in Action Plan 2015-2018:

- A prosperous city
- A city of inspiring neighbourhoods
- A city that moves
- A healthy and green city
- A well-run city

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

Social

Centre City initiatives and continued investment in the public realm supports community building where people feel connected, safe, valued and included.

Environmental

Centre City initiatives align with The City's Environmental Policy, aiming to reduce energy use and expand sustainable transportation options for walking, cycling and public transportation.

Economic

A vibrant and healthy Centre City positively impacts Calgary's economy, providing an attractive location for residents and businesses alike. The Centre City generates over 25 per cent of the City's tax revenue. Continued investment in the Centre City will have a positive impact on future economic development.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

None

Current and Future Capital Budget:

None

Risk Assessment

There are no significant risks associated with this project.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

This annual report fulfills the direction of the Centre City Plan (CPC2007-049) which includes a recommendation for regular monitoring and reporting on the Centre City.

ATTACHMENT(S)

2015 Centre City Citizen Perception Survey Infographic